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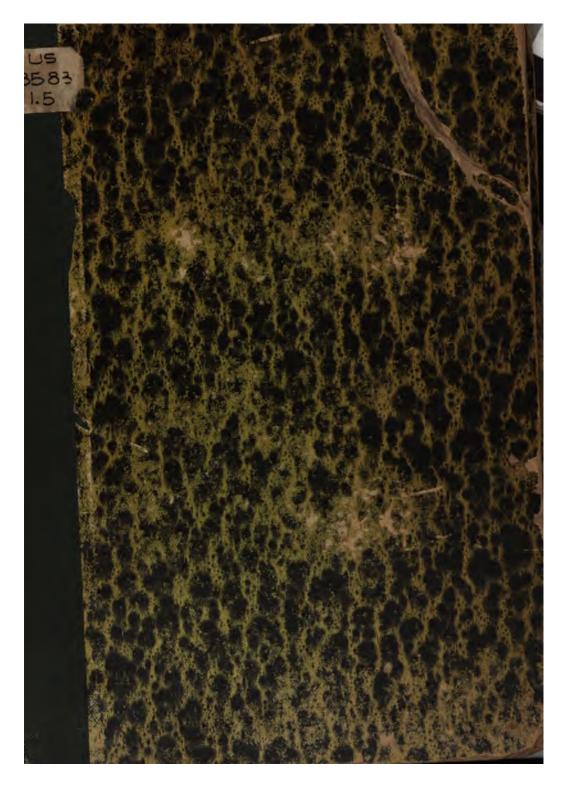
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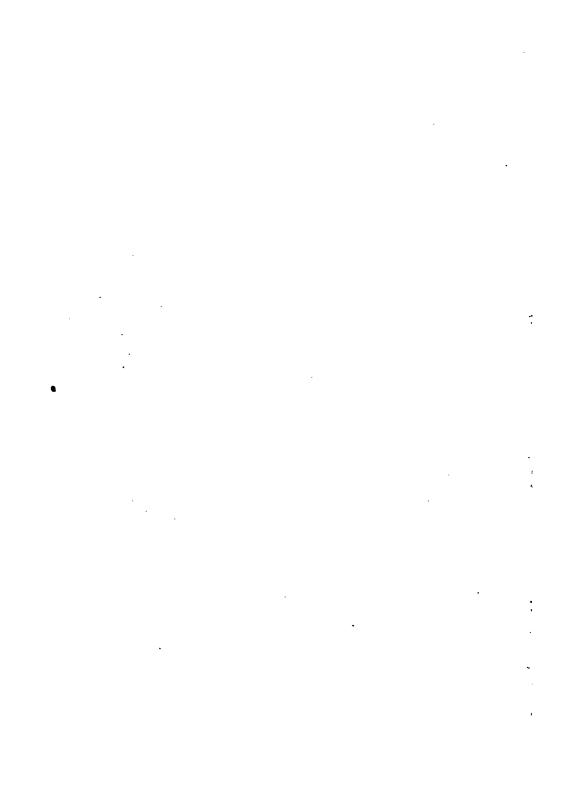
THE BEQUEST OF

EVERT JANSEN WENDELL (CLASS OF 1882)

OF NEW YORK

1918





Vol. XVII.

DECEMBER, 1903

III. C

Mittle Journeps

To Homes of Great Scientists

JOHN FISHE



Single Copes 25 ante He the Year, \$3.00

Little Journeys for 1906

By ELBERT RUBBARD

Will be to the Homes of Great Lovers

The Subjects are as Follows:

- I Josiah and Sarah Wedgwood
- 2 William Godwin and Mary Wollstonecraft
- 3 Dante and Beatrice
- 4 John Stuart Mill and Harriet Taylor
- 5 Parnell and Kitty O'Shea
- 6 Petrarch and Laura
- 7 Dante Gabriel Rossetti & Elizabeth Siddall
- 8 Balzac and Madame Hanska
- 9 Fencion and Madame Guyon
- 10 Ferdinand Lassalle & Helene von Donniges
- 11 Victor Hugo and Juliene Drouet
- 12 Robert Louis Stevenson & Fanny Osbourne

TEN YEARS OF THE PHILISTINE

An Index & Concordance

OF VOLUMES I TO XX

Compiled by Julia Ditto Young, Bound solidly in Boards to match The Philistine

THE ROYCROFTERS

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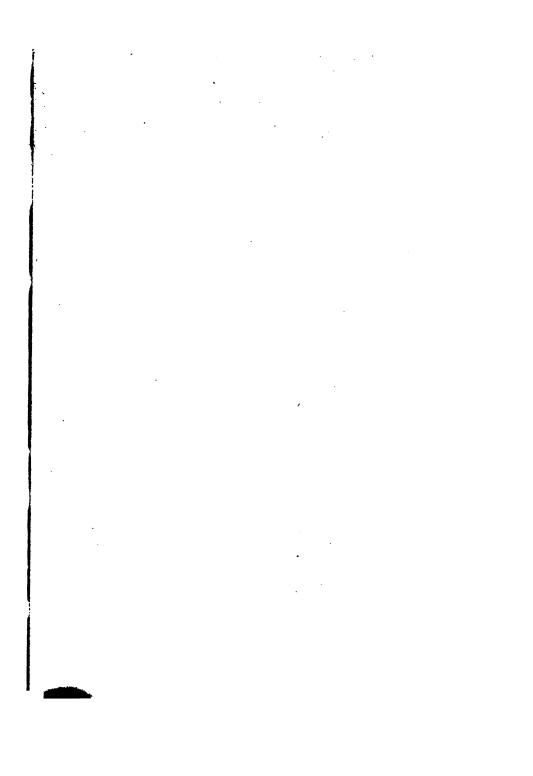
HANVARU COLLEGE LIENARY FROM THE BEQUEST OF EVERT JANSEN WENDELL 1918

JOHN FISKE





John Fiske



In a sinless and painless world the moral element would be lacking; the goodness would have no more significance in our conscious life than that load of atmosphere which we are always carrying about with us.

We are thus brought to a striking conclusion, the essential soundness of which cannot be gainsaid. In a happy world there must be pain and sorrow, and in a moral world the knowledge of evil is indispensable. The stern necessity for this has been proved to inhere in the innermost constitution of the human soul. It is part and parcel of the universe. To him who is disposed to cavil at the world which God has in such wise created, we may fairly put the question whether the prospect of escape from its ills would ever induce him to put off this human consciousness, and accept in exchange some form of existence unknown and inconceivable! The alternative is clear: on the one hand a world with sin and suffering, on the other hand an unthinkable world in which conscious life does not involve contrast \$3.36\$

We do not find that evil has been interpolated into the universe from without; we find that, on the contrary, it is an indispensable part of the dramatic whole. God is the creator of evil, and from the eternal scheme of things diabolism is forever excluded. Ormuzd and Ahriman have had their day and perished, along with the doctrine of special creation and other fancies of the untutored human mind. From our present standpoint we may fairly ask, what would have been the worth of that primitive innocence portrayed in the myth of the garden of Eden, had it ever been realized in the life of men? What would have been the moral value or significance of a race of human beings ignorant of sin, and doing beneficent acts with no more consciousness or volition than the deftly contrived machine that picks up raw material at one end, and turns out some finished product at the other? Clearly, for strong and resolute men and women an Eden would be but a fool's paradise.

—THROUGH NATURE TO GOD.

JOHN FISKE

ARLY in life John Fiske aimed high and thought himself capable of great things. He also believed that the world accepted a man at the estimate he placed upon himself.

Fiske was born at Hartford in 1842. His mother's maiden name was Fiske and his father's name was Green, and until well-nigh manhood, John Fiske was called Edmund Green.

His father died while Edmund was a baby, and the wee youngster was taken charge of by his grandmother Fiske of Middletown, Connecticut.

When his mother married again Edmund did not approve of the match. Parents often try to live their children's lives for them, and to hold the balance true, children occasionally attempt to dictate to parents in affairs of the heart. A young man by the name of Hamlet will be recalled who having no special business of his own became much distressed and had theories concerning the conduct of his mother. As a general proposition the person who looks after the territory directly under his own hat will find his time fairly well employed.

LITTLE

They say Edmund Green made threats when his mother changed her name, but all he did was to follow her example and change his. Thereafter he was plain John Fiske—"I must have a name easy to take hold of—one that people can remember," he said. And they do say that John Fiske's reverence for John Ruskin had something to do with his choice of name.

Just here some curious one of the curious sex, which by the way holds no monopoly on curiosity, may ask if the second venture of Mrs. Green was fruitful and fortunate. So I will say, yes, eminently so; and in one way it seemed to serve, for John Fiske's stepfather waived John's displeasure with his stepfather's wife, and did something toward sending the young man to Harvard University, and also supplied the funds to send him on a tour around the world.

However, the second brood revealed no genius, at sight of which the defunct Mr. Green from his seat in Elysium must have chortled in glee, assuming, of course, that disembodied spirits are cognizant of the doings of their late partners, as John Fiske seemed to think they were.

If Alexander Humboldt's mother had not married again, we would have had no Alexander Humboldt. Second marriages are like first ones in this: Sometimes they are happy and sometimes not. In any event, I occasionally think that mother-love has often been much exaggerated. Love is a most beautiful thing, and it does not seem to make very much difference who supplies it. Stepmother love, Lincoln used to say, was

LITTLE JOURNEY:

the most precious thing that had ever come his way. I know a man who loves his mother-in-law, because she did pity him. Our Oneida friends had "Community Mothers" who took care of everybody's babies, just as if they were their own, and with marked success, for the genus hoodlum never evolved at Oneida. Grandmother love served all purposes for little Isaac Newton, just as it did for John Fiske.

John Fiske's grandmother was his first teacher, and she started out with the assumption that genius always skips one generation. She believed that she was dealing with a record-breaker, and she was. What she did not know about the classics, was known by others whom she delegated to teach her grandchild. When her baby genius was just out of linsey woolsey dresses and wore trousers buttoned to a calico waist, she began preparing him for college. The old lady had loved a college man in her youth, and she judged Harvard by the Harvard man she knew best. And the Harvard man she saw in her waking dreams, she created in her own image. Harvard requires perspective, and viewed over the years through a mist of melancholy it is very beautiful. At close range we often get a Jarrett Bumbell flavor of cigarettes and a sight of the foam that made Milwaukee famous. To a great degree gran'ma Fiske created her Harvard out of the stuff that dreams are made on. When her little charge was six years old she began preparing him for Harvard by teaching him to say "amo, amas, amat." (I At seven years of age he was reading Cæsar's Com-

LITTLE

mentaries and making wise comments over his bowl of bread and milk about the Tenth Legion; and he also had his opinions concerning the relationship of Cæsar with Cleopatra. At this time he read Josephus for rest, and discovered for himself that the famous passage about Jesus of Nazareth was an interpolation.

When he was eight he was familiar with Plato, had read all of Shakespeare's plays and propounded a few hypotheses concerning the authorship of the Sonnets. **Q** At nine he spoke Greek with an Attic accent. When ten he had read Prescott, Gibbon, and Macaulay, and about this time as a memory test he wrote a history of the world from the time of Moses down to the date of his own birth, giving a list of the greatest men who had ever lived, with a brief mention of what they had done, with the date of their birth and death.

This book is still in existence and so far as I know has never been equaled by the performance of any infant prodigy—save possibly John Stuart Mill.

When twelve years of age he had read Virgil, Sallust, Tacitus, Ovid, Juvenal and Catullus. He had also mastered trigonometry, surveying, navigation, geometry and differential calculus.

Before his grandmother had him discard knee-breeches he kept his diary in Spanish, spoke German at the table, read German philosophy in the original. The year he was sixteen he wrote poems after Dante in Italian and translated Cervantes into English. At seventeen he read the Hebrew scriptures like a Rabbi, and was familiar with Sanskrit.

LITTLE JOURNEYS

Now let no carpist imagine I have dealt in hyperbole, or hand-illumined the facts—I have merely stated some simple truths about the early career of John Fiske. **Q** One might imagine that with all his wonderful achievements this youth would be top-heavy and a most insufferable prig. The fact was, he was a fine rollicking, healthy young man much given to pranks, and withal generous and lovable.

He was admitted to Harvard without examination, for his fame had preceded him. Students and professors alike looked at him in wonder.

At Cambridge, as if to keep good his record, he studied thirteen hours a day, for twelve months in the year. He ranged through every subject in the catalog, and all recorded knowledge was to him familiar.

Prophecies were freely made that he would eclipse Sir Isaac Newton and Humboldt. But there were others who had a clearer vision.

John Fiske made a decided success in life and left his personality distinctly impressed upon his time, but it is no disparagement to say of him that autumn did not fulfill the promise of spring. And Fiske himself in his single original contribution to the evolution crusade explains the reason why.

Professor Santayanna of Harvard once said that John Fiske made three great scientific discoveries, as follows:

- 1.—As you lengthen a pigeon's bill, you increase the size of its feet.
- 2.—White tomcats with blue eyes are always deaf.

LITTLE OURNEYS

3.—The extent of mental development in any animal is in proportion to its infancy or the length of time involved in its reaching physical maturity.

Waiving Numbers One and Two as of doubtful value, Number Three is Fiske's sole original discovery, according to his confession. Further, Huxley quotes Fiske on this theme, and adds, "The delay of adolescence and the prolonging of the period of infancy form a subject, as expressed by Mr. Fiske, which is worthy of our most careful consideration."

Rare-ripes fall early. John Fiske's name was coupled, as we have seen, with those of Newton and Humboldt. Newton died at eighty-six, Humboldt at ninety. These men developed slowly—the hot-house methods were not for them. Fiske at twenty knew more than any of them did at forty. Fiske at twenty-five was a better man mentally and physically than he was at thirty-five. At forty he was refused life insurance because his measurement east and west was out of proportion to his measurement north and south.

He used often to sit at his desk for fifteen hours a day, writing and studying. The sedentary habit grew upon him; the vital organs got clogged with adipose tissue. The doctor told him that "his diaphragm was too close to his lungs,"—a cheerful proposition, well worthy of a small, mouse-colored medicus who dare not risk displeasing a big patient by telling him the truth—i. e. that deep breathing and active exercise in the open air can never be replaced through the use of something poured out of a bottle.

LITTLE JOURNEY

People who eat too much, drink too much, smoke too much, and do not exercise enough, have to pay for their privileges even though they are able to work differential calculus with one hand and recite Xenophon's Anabasis backward. They all have the liver and lungs too close to the diaphragm, because that damnable invention of Sir Isaac Newton's slumbers not nor sleeps, and all of the vital organs droop and drop when we neglect deep breathing. Inertia is a vice. The gods cultivate levitation, which is a different thing from levity, meaning skyey gravitation—uplift, aspiration expressed in bodily attitude.

When levitation lets go, gravity doubles its grip.

The Yogi of the East know vastly more about this theme than we do, and have made of deep breathing an art. Carry the crown of your head high, hold your chin in, and fill the top of your lungs by cultivating levitation. We are gods in the biscuit!



FTER four years at Harvard and the regulation two years at the Harvard Law School, John Fiske opened an office in Boston and gave his shingle to the breeze. Q No clients came, and this was well—for the clients. Also for John. The law is

a business proposition—its essence is the adjustment of differences between men—the lubrication of exchange—getting things on! Learned men very seldom make good lawyers. Law is a very practical matter,

LITTLE

and as for "Law Latin," it can be learned in a week and then should be mostly forgotten. The lawyer who asks his client about the "causa sine qua non," or harangues the jury concerning the "ipse dixit of de facto and de jure," will probably be mulcted for costs on general principles.

"I always rule hard against the lawyer who quotes Latin," said a Brooklyn judge to me the other day. Happily, Law Latin is now not used to any extent, excepting in Missouri.

No more clients came to John Fiske than they did to Wendell Phillips, who once had a law office on the same street. So John sent letters to the newspapers, wrote book reviews, and contributed essays to the "Atlantic Monthly." Occasionally, he would lecture for scientific clubs or societies.

While still in the Law School he had discounted the future and married a charming young woman, who believed in him to an extent that would have made the average man pause.

Marriages do not always keep pace exactly with the price of corn.

Receipts in the Fiske law office were not active. John Fiske was twenty-six; his grandmother was dead, and family cares were coming along apace, all according to the Law of Malthus.

He accepted an offer to give substitute lectures at Harvard on history for a professor who had gone abroad for his health. This he continued, speaking for any absentee on any subject, and tutoring rich laggards for a consideration. Good boys, low on phosphorus, used to get him to start their daily themes, and those overtaken in the throes of trigonometry he often rescued from disgrace.

LITTLE JOURNEY

Darwinism was in the saddle. Asa Gray was mildly defending it, Agassiz stood aloof clinging to his early Swiss-parsonage teachings, and the Theological Department marched in solid phalanx and scoffed and scorned. Yale, always having more theology than Harvard, threw out challenges. Fiske had saturated himself with the ideas of Darwin and Wallace and his intellect was great enough to perceive the vast and magnificent scope of the "Origin of Species." He prepared and read a lecture on the subject, all couched in gentle and judicial phrase, but with a finale that gave forth no uncertain sound.

The Overseers decided to ask Fiske to amplify the subject and give a course of lectures on the Law of Evolution.

The subject grew under his hands and the course extended itself into thirty-five lectures, covering the whole field of Natural History, with many short excursions into the realms of biology, embryology, botany, geology and cosmogony.

Fiske was made assistant librarian at a salary of one thousand dollars a year. It was not much money, but it gave him a fixed position, with time to help the erring freshman and the mentally recalcitrant sophomore handicapped by rich parents. For seven years Fiske held this position of assistant librarian, and

LITTLE OURNEYS

hardly a student at Harvard during those years but acknowledged the personal help he received at the hands of John Fiske. Knowledge consists in having an assistant librarian who knows where to find the thing. **G** Fiske's thirty-five lectures had evolved into that excellent book "Outlines of Cosmic Philosophy." The public were buying it.

Evolution was fast taking its place as a fixed fact. And John Fiske was moving into public favor on the flood tide. There were demands for his lectures from various schools, colleges and lyceums, throughout the United States.

He resigned his position so as to give all his time to writing and speaking. And Harvard, proud of her gifted son, elected him an overseer of the University, which position he held until his death. John Fiske died in 1901, suddenly, aged fifty-nine.

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MERSON says, "Next to the originator of a great thought is the man who quotes it."

Next to the discoverer of a great scientific truth is the man who recognizes and upholds it.

The service done science by John Fiske is beyond calculation. Fiske was not a Columbus upon the sea of science—he followed the course laid out by others, and was really never out of sight of a buoy. He comes as near being a great scientist, perhaps, as any man that America has ever produced.

I ittle Journeys for 1906 will be to Homes of Great Lovers

SUBJECTS ARE AS FOLLOWS:

- 1 Josiah and Sarah Wedgwood
- 2 William Godwin and Mary Wollstonecraft
- 3 Dante and Beatrice
- 4 John Stuart Mill and Harriet Taylor
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HE thinking men and women of the world have awarded to Elbert Hubbard the degree of Doctor of Commonsense," says Baily Millard in the "Cosmopolitan" for September. Q And we think the award is just. Elbert Hubbard is the sanest, most vivid, direct and original writer in America and many look upon him as a philosopher of so big and generous a type that he is worthy to be called the true successor of Herbert Spencer, the greatest philosopher of his age. M Hubbard has a firm and sure grasp on practical economics. He is a successful business man, a remarkable writer and an orator of power. His experience in the world of workers, in business, as a teacher and before the people as a public lecturer, has given him a broad outlook into methods, motives and possibilities. He views things from the vantage ground of actual contact A That philosophic nugget "A Message to Garcia," could only have been written by a man who had been both employee and employer—a man who had received orders and given them. Hubbard is a working man and also a capitalist. He is, moreover, a superintendent and director of labor. If there is any other living writer who deals with life with the same courage, faith and hope that Elbert Hubbard reveals, we do not remember his name.

Hubbard is a teacher of the people who teach. He supplies texts for many sermons—where his name is never mentioned; he suggests thoughts for editorial writers and gives to many an essayist his needed initial impulse. Hubbard's influence is strongest among the people who play big parts on life's stage. If the best of genius lies not in the ability to produce likemindedness, but to stir men up to think for themselves. Hubbard divides men. And society to-day is fast reaching a point where there are but two classes, those who read Elbert Hubbard and those who don't And those who don't, can't. To disparage this man is proof of incapacity.

And no matter what the nimble critics may say, Elbert Hubbard's life is dedicated to the service of mankind, and he who declares otherwise has never seen the man, heard him speak, nor visited the place which he has made famous. And the fact that in working for mankind Hubbard regards himself as an important part of mankind, need not weigh in the balance 'gainst him, for Elbert Hubbard, of all men, is wise enough to know that the only way to benefit yourself is to benefit others.

—Denver Post.

LITTLE JOURNEY!

America has had but four men of unmistakable originality. These are: Franklin, Emerson, Whitman and Edison. Each worked in a field particularly his own, and the genius of each one was recognized in Europe before we were willing to acknowledge it here. But the word "scientist" can hardly be properly applied to any of these men. For want of a better name we call John Fiske our greatest scientist. He was the most learned man of his day. In the realm of Physical Geography no American could approach him. The combined knowledge of everybody else was his—he had a passion for facts, a memory like a day-book, and his systematic mind was disciplined until it was a regular Dewey card-index.

Louis Agassiz was born in Europe, but he was ours by adoption, and he might dispute with Fiske the title to first place in the American Pantheon of Science were it not for the fact that the Law of Evolution was beyond his ken, being obscured by a marked, myopic, theological, stigmatic squint.

Agassiz died in his sins, unconvinced, unrepentant, refusing the rite of extreme unction that Asa Gray offered him, his sensitive spirit writhing at mention of the word "Darwin." On his tomb, Clio with moving finger has carved one of his own sentences, nor all your tears shall blot a line of it. And these are the words of Agassiz: "Darwinism seeks to dethrone God, and replace Him by a blind force called The Law of Evolution." So passed away the great soul of Louis Agassiz.

LITTLE

Fiske has been called the Huxley of America; but Fiske was like Agassiz in this, he never had the felicity to achieve the ill-will of the many.

Fiske has also been called the Drummond of America, but Fiske was really a Henry Drummond and a Louis Agassiz rolled into one, the mass well seasoned with essence of Huxley.

John Fiske made the science of Darwin and Wallace palatable to orthodox theology, and it is to the earnest and eloquent words of Fiske that we owe it that Evolution is taught everywhere in the public schools and even in the sectarian colleges of America to-day.

The almost universal opposition to Darwin's book arose from the idea that its acceptance would destroy the Christian religion.

This was the plaintive plea put forth when Newton advanced his discovery of the Law of Gravitation, and also when Copernicus proclaimed the movements of the earth,—these things were contrary to the Bible! Copernicus was a loyal Catholic; Sir Isaac Newton was a staunch Churchman, but both kept their religion in water-tight compartments, so that it never got mixed with their science. Gladstone never allowed his religion to tint his statesmanship, and we all know business men who follow the double-entry scheme. That French toast, "Here's to our wives and sweethearts—may they never meet!" would suit most lawyers just as well if expressed this way, "Here's to our religion and our business—God knows they

LITTLE JOURNEY

never meet!" **Q**To Sir Isaac Newton, religion was something to be believed, not understood. He left religion to the specialists, recognizing its value as a sort of police protection for the state, and as his share in the matter he paid tithes and attended prayers as a matter of patriotic duty and habit.

Voltaire recognized the greatness of Newton's intellect, but he could not restrain his aqua fortis and so he said this, "All the scientists were jealous of Newton when he discovered the Law of Gravitation, but they got even with him when he wrote his book on the 'Hebrew Prophecies'!" Newton wrote that book in his water-tight compartment.

But Newton was no hypocrite. The attitude of the Primrose Sphinx who bowed his head in the Church of England Chapel—the Jew who rose to the highest office Christian England had to offer—and repeated Ben Ezra's prayer, was not the attitude of Newton. Darwin waived religion, and if he ever heard of the Bible no one knew it from his writings. Huxley danced on it. Tyndall and Spencer regarded the Bible as a valuable and more or less interesting collection of myths, fables, and folk-lore tales. Wallace sees in it a strain of prophetic truth and regards it as gold-bearing quartz of a low grade. Fiske regarded it as the word of God, Holy Writ, expressed often vaguely, mystically and in the language of poetry and symbol, but true when rightly understood.

And so John Fiske throughout his life spoke in orthodox pulpits to the great delight of Christian people

LITTLE OURNEYS

and at the same time wrote books on science and dedicated them to Thomas Huxley, Bishop of all Agnostics. Q To the scientist the word "supernatural" is a contradiction. Everything that is in the Universe is natural; the supernatural is the natural not yet understood. And what is called the supernatural is often but the figment of a disordered, undisciplined or undeveloped imagination.

Simple people think of imagination as that quality of mind which revels in fairy tales and stories of hobgoblins, but such an imagination is undisciplined and undeveloped. The scientist who deals with the sternest of facts must be highly imaginative, or his work is vain. The engineer sees his structure complete, ere he draws his plans. So the scientist divines the thing first and then looks for it until he finds it. Were this not so he would not be able to recognize things hitherto unknown, when he saw them, nor could he fit fact to fact, like bones in a skeleton, and build a complete structure if it all did not first exist as a thought.

To reprove and punish children for flights of imagination, John Fiske argued was one of the things done only by a barbaric people. Children first play at the thing, which later they are to do well. Play is preparation. The man of imagination is the man of sympathy, and such only are those who benefit and bless mankind and help us on our way.

John Fiske had imagination enough to follow closely and hold fellowship with the greatest minds the world has ever known.

LITTLE JOURNEY

John Fiske believed that we live in a natural universe and that God works through Nature, and that in fact Nature is the spirit of God at work.

Doubts never disturbed John Fiske. Things that were not true technically and literally, were true to him if taken in a spiritual or poetic way. God, to him, was a personal being, creating through the Law of Evolution because He chose to. The six days of creation, were six eons or geologic periods.

No man has ever been more in sympathy with the discoverers in Natural History than John Fiske. No man ever knew so much about his work as John Fiske. His knowledge was colossal, his memory prodigious. And in all of the realm of science and philosophy, from microscopy and the germ theory, to advanced astronomy and the birth of worlds, his flowing imagination saw the work of a beneficent Creator who stood above and beyond and outside of Natural Law and with infinite Wisdom and Power did His own Divine Will.

Little theologians who feared science on account of danger to pet texts, received from him kindly pats on the head, as he showed them how both science and scripture were true. He didn't do away with texts, he merely changed their interpretation. And often he discovered that the text which seemed to contradict science was really prophetic of it. John Fiske did not take anything away from anybody, unless he gave them something better in return. **Q"A** man's belief is a part of the man," he said. "Take it away by force

LITTLE

and he will bleed to death; but if the time comes that he no longer needs it, he will either slough it, or convert it into something more useful."

Every good thing begins as something else. Evolution is at work on the creeds as well as in matter. A monkey-man will have a monkey belief. He evolves the thing he needs, and the belief that fits one man will not another. Religious opinions are never thrown away—they evolve into something else, and we use the old symbols and imagery to express new thoughts. ¶John Fiske, unlike John Morley, considered "Compromise" a great thing. "Truth is a point of view—let us get together," he used to say. And so he worked to keep the old, as a foundation for the new.

I once heard him interrupted in a lecture by a questioner who asked, "Why would you keep the Church intact?" The question stung him into impassioned speech which was better than anything in his manuscript. I cannot attempt to reproduce his exact language, but the intent was that as the Church was the chief instrument in preserving for us the learning of Greece and Rome, so has she been the mother of art, the inspirer of music and the protector of the outcast. Colleges, hospitals, libraries, asylums, art galleries, all come to us through the medium of religion. The convent was first a place of protection for oppressed womanhood.

To discard religion would be like repudiating our parents because we did not like their manners and clothes. The religious impulse is the art impulse, and

LITTLE [OURN]

both are manifestations of love—and love is the basis of our sense of sublimity.

Certain phases of religion we surely will abandon. We will purify, refine and beautify our religion, just as we have our table etiquette and our housekeeping. The millennium will come only through the scientific acceptance of piety. When the Church and State separated it was well, but when Science and Religion joined hands it was better. Science stands for the head; religion for the heart. All things are dual, and through the marriage of these two principles, one the masculine and the other the feminine, will come a renaissance of advancement such as this tired old world on her zigzag journeys has never seen. Sociology is the religious application of economics. Demonology has been replaced by psychology, and the betterment of man's condition on earth is now fast becoming the chief solicitude of the Church.

It will thus be seen that John Fiske's hope for the future was bright and strong. The man was an optimist by nature, and his patience and good nature were always in evidence. He made friends, and he held them. Huxley, who of all men hated piety that was flavored with hypocrisy, loved John Fiske and once wrote this: "There was a man sent from God by the name of John Fiske. Now John holds in his great and generous heart the best of all the Church has to offer, hence I no longer go to prayers, but instead, I invite John Fiske to come and dine with us every Sunday, so are we made better—Amen."

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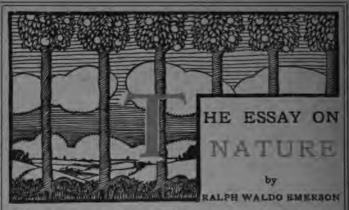


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